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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-fifth year

Identical letters dated 14 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit the annexed letter of the President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, regarding the pledge of Georgia not to use force either against Russian occupying forces or against their proxies in the Georgian territories occupied by the Russian Federation.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, under agenda item 34, "Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development", and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 14 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Letter dated 30 November 2010 from the President of Georgia addressed to the Secretary-General

On 23 November 2010, in an address to the European Parliament, I pledged that Georgia will not use force either against Russian occupying forces or against their proxies in the Georgian territories occupied by the Russian Federation, even though the Charter of the United Nations empowers us to do so. Georgia will only retain the right to self-defence in the case of new military attacks against the Georgian Government and people of Georgia.

With this letter, I would like to formalize this commitment to you, in your capacity as Secretary-General of the United Nations. The United Nations has a major stake in the successful resolution of the situation in Georgia, due to the principles for which the Organization stands, and also as co-chair of the Geneva Discussions.

The Russian Federation continues to illegally occupy 20 per cent of Georgian territory, in blatant violation of international law and the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement signed by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and Georgia, and brokered thanks to the mediation of President Sarkozy, on behalf of the European Union. Up to 500,000 internally displaced persons and refugees, victims of ethnic cleansing, remain unable to return home. The Russian Federation also systematically undermines the Geneva Discussions, until now the only format for dialogue supported by the international community.

Despite these violations and despite the fact that the Georgian Government already considers itself bound by the 12 August ceasefire agreement and has always considered that this ceasefire prohibits the use of force, we unilaterally declare that we will seek reunification and de-occupation only through peaceful means, without resorting to force.

Our unilateral commitment to the non-use of force immediately becomes our legal obligation under international law.

We make this pledge hoping that Russia will finally start to comply with the 12 August ceasefire agreement and fundamental principles of international law, even if the Russian leadership has refused until now to recognize the legitimacy of the Georgian Government, aimed at establishing the conditions for a peaceful resolution of our conflict with the Russian Federation.

In closing, I would like to extend my utmost gratitude for the role that the United Nations is playing to peacefully resolve the conflict. I also would like to express my hope that, with your assistance and mediation, Georgia and Russia will manage to engage in productive high-level talks. The Georgian side is certainly prepared to do so.

(*Signed*) Mikheil **Saakashvili**